

"HELPUSEHELPYOU"

If you're not happy with the bids you're getting it could be due to the fact that important information is missing from your project description. This information allows qualified service providers to bid accurately on your project.

You've probably heard that form follows function. That means you can't create (or judge) a Design until you know what its supposed to do. A Logo/Ad/Brochure,/Web site/Package/ is only effective if it represents that which it's meant to represent. Without accurate conveyance, its worthless.

To understand the goals of your project we need a good Creative Brief. A Creative Brief is like a road map. A good brief leads to imaginative and persuasive graphics and gets you there quickly. Without it you're lost. A bad brief starts you off in the wrong direction so you have to stop, figure out where the heck you're going, and start again. If you're thinking, "We don't have time to write a brief." Remember that working from verbal input, without a written brief, is how non-professionals waste time and money.

Here's a typical Creative Brief.

Background / Overview:

What's the big picture? What's going on in the market? Anything happening with the client side we should know about? Can you summarize the entire brief into one sentence, "Who are we talking to, and what do we want to say?"

What is the objective, the purpose of the piece?

A concise statement of the effect the design should have on viewers. Typically expressed as an action. And frequently focused either on what you want them to think, to feel, or to do.

What do we want to say?

What's the single most important thing we can say to achieve the objective? This should be a simple sentence (or sentences) expressing a specific idea (or ideas). Avoid generalities because they result in ambiguous communications.

What are the supporting rational and emotional 'reasons to believe?'

List the rational and emotional reasons to for the target market to believe what we want them to believe, and do what we want them to do. Include all the major copy points, in order of relative importance to the consumer. In other words, 'What else can we say to achieve the objective?'

Target audience: who are we talking to?

The more precise and detailed the better. Go beyond age and sex to include demographics and psychographics.

Any other important details?

Here's where you put all other details, such as information about the offer if it's a direct response ad. Perhaps a description of the brand personality. And any mandatory elements such as the client's logo, address, phone number and so forth. Don't assume anything.

What do we need and when do we need it?

Write information about media, size and format. As well as deadlines for 1) initial creative review of rough sketch ideas, 2) review revised creative, 3) final internal creative presentation, 4) client presentation, 5) final material delivered to Print/Production.

Client / Account Service Checklist:

IMPORTANT!: Do we have all supporting information?: Not just screenshots and logos but previous ads, literature, style guides, videos, articles -- perhaps competitor ads or web sites for reference? This so you can present the creative team a complete package of information.

If this is a long format communication -- a Web page, contest, etc. -- do we have an outline for the creative team that includes all the important copy points, as well as an indication of visuals?

Is it clear from the client what MUST be in the communication, and what MIGHT be in the communication (What are the client "must haves" and "would like to haves")?

What We Are Looking For In Your Answers

- How do materials relate to each other visually, verbally - and in light of the stated goals?
- Is there consistency in style & personality?
- Is there an apparent Design Policy?

Visual Audit

Make sure to attach a copy of all existing packaging, literature & art (screenshots, assets, key art etc.) with the Creative Brief for the visual audit.

Thanks!



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